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ABSTRACT

Existing qualitative studies of school principals suffer from procedural or conceptual shortcomings that result in failure to clarify the principal's instructional role. This paper describes the methodology and procedures of a year-long, multimethod, multilevel field study of 12 school principals. First, the background for the study (the literature review, preliminary interviews, and selection of participants) is summarized. Then each of the various research activities employed in the study is described. Phase I procedures include school description instrument and initial interview, the shadow and reflective interview, the organizational cruise, and the site visit. Phase II procedures involved classroom observations and reflective interviews, structured interviews with teachers, student interviews, and use of the Instructional Organization Instrument to provide baseline data about classroom and school operations. Data samples are provided, and data management and analysis procedures are discussed. Finally, the advantages and disadvantages of presenting findings involving lengthy case studies are discussed. Included are tables, 4 appendices containing interview protocols and the Instructional Organization Instrument. Contains 52 references. (MLH)

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ED 373 392

Instructional Management Program

Understanding the Principal's Contribution to Instruction: Seven Principals, Seven Stories

Methodology

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November 1988

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO INSTRUCTION: SEVEN PRINCIPALS, SEVEN STORIES

Methodology

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ABSTRACT

Existing qualitative studies of school principals suffer from procedural or conceptual shortcomings that result in their failure to clarify the role of the principal in instruction. This paper describes the methodology and procedures of a yearlong, multimethod, multilevel field study of 12 school principals. First, the background for the study--the literature review, preliminary interviews, and selection of participants--is summarized. Then, each of the various research activities employed in the study is described. Samples of the data are provided. Procedures for managing and analyzing the large qualitative data set are discussed. Finally, the boons and banes of presenting the findings from such a study in the form of lengthy case studies is discussed. This monograph exists as a companion volume for the case study documents written by the staff of the Instructional Management Program.

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METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This paper discusses an ethnographic approach to the study of the instructional management behavior of principals who work in a variety of school contexts. This field-based and collaborative effort was undertaken to probe a paradox found in research about principals and effective schools. While descriptive studies of principals argue that the work of principals is varied, fragmented, and little concerned with instructional matters (Peterson, 1978; Pitner, 1982; Sproull, 1979), effective-school studies proffer the centrality of principals in the creation of potent instructional settings (Armor et al., 1976; Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979).

We have argued that this disparity results from research designs based on insufficient conceptions of schools as complex organizations, from the failure to examine instruction as both a technical and social process, and from conceptions of student outcomes that are too narrowly defined (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Rowan, Bossert, & Dwyer, 1983). Information about the leadership that principals can provide for the instructional processes within their schools, then, remains incomplete and confused.

In an effort to solve this enigma, many researchers have rushed to catch the recently rolling qualitative bandwagon. As we survey these qualitative studies of principals and their roles as instructional leaders, we find that they cluster into three groups:

1. Mintzberg-type studies in which researchers follow principals through a number of days of activity and then categorize and count principals' actions (e.g., Martin & Willower, 1981).

2. Interview studies in which principals are questioned about their experiences and the nature of their work (e.g., Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980).

3. Anecdotal inquiries in which researchers probe for a general understanding of some aspect of

the principalship, using observation and interview, but lacking the intensiveness of ethnographies (e.g., Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz, & Porter-Gehrie, 1982; Weber, 1971).

Each of these types of qualitative studies has contributed perspectives on the nature of the principalship. None of them, however, succeeds in clarifying the principal's role in instruction. Because of procedural or conceptual shortcomings, they only echo the fundamental paradox. For example, the Morris group concludes that principals are little concerned with instructional matters, while the Blumberg and Greenfield work lauds principals' potency as instructional leaders.

Our study builds on the existing qualitative literature about school principals, articulating the basic procedures used by the three types of qualitative studies we described. This combination of inquiry procedures aligns our work with the research tradition variously called educational ethnography, participant observation, or case study by its leading practitioners (e.g., Becker, Greer, Hughes, & Strauss, 1961; Cicourel et al., 1974; Rist, 1973; L. M. Smith, 1978; Spindler, 1982; Walker, 1932; Wax, Wax, & DuMont, 1964).*

The theoretical underpinning for our inquiry is consonant with the work of phenomenologists and symbolic interactionists. That is, we do not believe that we can adequately understand the instructional operation of schools or the work of principals by thinking of schools as organizations that "function automatically because of some inner dynamics or system requirements" (Blumer, 1969, p. 19). Rather, we seek to describe the way work is organized within any particular school, the behavior of the participants in that setting, and the meaning those participants assign to their actions. In this respect, we agree with the thinking of Berger and Luckmann when they suggest that more than "casual obeisance be . . . paid to the 'human factor' behind the uncovered structural data" (1967, p. 186).

This paper describes the procedures we have employed in our continuing study of the role of the school principal in instructional management and illustrates from our multimethod and multilevel field study the methodological and theoretical rationale for a major conclusion from our work: Principals do affect the instructional processes of their schools. We propose that their ability to have an impact varies with their capacity to link their routine management activities to their instructional systems and to perform these actions in accord with their overarching views of schooling.

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*Two excellent examples of this form of research applied to the study of principals are the works of Wolcott (1973) and Rosenblum and Jastrzab (n.d.). Unfortunately, it was not the intent of either study to examine the relationships between school principals, instruction, and student outcomes.

Preliminary Work: Literature Review and Investigatory Interviews

We began our work with an examination of the effective schools research and extended our consideration to include previous work on instructional organization, leadership, authority and influence, and organizational climate. From this general search, we derived a model of instructional management that related individual and contextual variables to the behavior of principals in schools. We speculated about how those behaviors might influence the instructional organization and social climate of a school to actually affect student outcomes (see Bossert et al., 1982).

Beginning our study with an extensive literature review may seem puzzling, even heretical, to some who insist that field researchers begin their quests unaffected by preconceived ideas, that is as **tabulae rasae**. However, we acknowledge and value Malinowski's position:

> Good training in theory, and acquaintance with its latest results, is not identical with being burdened with preconceived ideas. . . . But the more problems [the researcher] brings with him into the field, the more he is in the habit of molding his theories according to facts. . . . Foreshadowed problems are the main endowment of a scientific thinker. (1922, pp. 8-9)

In this spirit, our review guided the next phase of the work, tuning our ears and shaping our questions.

Following our extensive reading, we interviewed 32 principals about instructional management. These men and women had been nominated by their superiors on the basis of their reputations as strong instructional leaders. The purpose of these lengthy conversations was to establish the phenomenological validity of the categories (Personal Characteristics, District Characteristics, External Characteristics, Principal Management Behavior, School Climate, Instructional Organization, and Student Outcomes) and the relationships between them that we suggested in our model. Did principals deem these areas relevant to leadership and instruction? Were the categories sufficiently comprehensive?

We probed principals' thoughts about the personal characteristics that they considered influential in their work; the community characteristics that they believed provided opportunities and limitations in their choice of actions; and the broader social contexts of their schools that affected their behaviors. We viewed these three categories as antecedents to principals' management activities. We also asked the principals to describe their typical activities, and we inquired about how they believed their actions affected their schools' climates and instructional organizations. Finally, we encouraged them to

describe ways in which they believed their activities actually benefitted children. In most instances, our subjects spent two or three hours discussing these subjects with us, and many commented about how much they had enjoyed the opportunity to tell their own stories. In Figure 1, we present a short sample from one of these interviews to illustrate the complexity and detail with which the principals spoke. (See Appendix A for protocol.)

These interviews added no new category to those described in our original model. The conversations did create the impression that principals work under diverse conditions and pressures and that they do pursue solutions to problems that affect instruction and student achievement. Although we heard many recall items from the heavily publicized core of effective school attributes (orderly climate, emphasis on basic skills, high expectations from students, and closely monitored objectives tied to instruction), we also heard rich descriptions of unique and particular approaches to school and instructional leadership. Moreover, these instructional management stories seemed much more complex than the effective schools literature indicated that they might be.

Interesting as they were, the school-site interviews created a one-sided view of these schools, and they required the introduction of other perspectives about the schools and the principals' roles. Furthermore, observation of the behavior of these school leaders was required to validate and extend their spoken stories. Thus, the promise and limitations of this first foray into the field led us back to the field.

We first returned to the field to accomplish an eight-week pilot study of principals and their instructional management strategies and structures. We invited five of the principals who had been interviewed to join us as collaborators in this venture. They were drawn from several districts and led schools that differed in student ethnic and SES composition. The principals also represented various styles or modes of leadership in their approaches to instructional management.

During this pilot phase, we shadowed and interviewed the principals, observed activities in classrooms and public spaces around the schools, and talked informally with staff members about their work and their principal. We published the results of this phase of our work in Five Principals in Action: Perspectives on Instructional Management (Dwyer et al., 1983). This effort impressed upon us the diversity of actions principals initiate and the importance of their routine activities for shaping and maintaining their organizations. In short, the groundwork had been laid for IMP's yearlong study of the instructional management behavior of 12 principals.

Site Selection for the Yearlong Field Study

Selection of the Participating Districts: The importance of district characteristics and community context as exogenous

Greg Alexander, Brentwood
3/5/82

I: You talked about this principal you worked with, that he was super organized, that was one of his main strengths that you try to model. How are you organized? What does that mean?

S: Well, I think it's important to do things early. I plan early. For example, if I have an event I let the staff know what its involvement's going to be--early. When it's close to the event, then I go over it again with the staff, so that they feel comfortable with what the task is, and what the expectations are for that particular task. And at the same time, you have to be organized for the daily operation of the school. The teachers and students need to know what the procedures are for accomplishing their daily everything. Whether that's taking roll, whether or not a kid's cutting class, what they're supposed to do--all those things have to be delineated. Since this is my first year here as principal, I spent all summer delineating those things. I have a book of policies and procedures that I distributed to every staff member at the beginning of this school year, so that they would know what the procedures are, what was expected of them. You have to be able to organize the staff to accomplish any of the tasks that are necessary or the demands placed upon you from the district level. You have to organize the events, the processes, the instructional program, the projects that you're trying to complete in a year, your goal orientation for that year. You have to identify all those things and identify all the people that you will hold responsible for those things, let those people know how they are going to be judged and evaluated on those things.

Another thing that's really important to me is to get feedback from the staff members on what it is that they're doing to accomplish that. How far have we gone? I gave a progress report in February and commended the staff for those things that I felt were moving us towards our goals. I identified individuals and gave a specific response, a specific acknowledgement of result. One of my goals was that we would increase staff participation with students. We've had a hard time in our district getting people to coach--even for pay!! So everybody that did that thing, I said specifically, item by item, those individuals who provided that experience for our students, I commend you for that and that is appreciated. People need to get that kind of feedback. And they need to know what we still have to do--we've done this, but we still have to move in these areas, we haven't accomplished these yet.

Figure 1: Sample of Initial Principal Interview

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variables to principal instructional management behavior was suggested by the theoretical conception and demonstrated by the pilot studies (Dwyer et al., 1983). As a result, the selection of sites was based on the importance of sampling the widest variety of contextual conditions available to the project in Far West Laboratory's three-state region. This strategy was also important because it allowed us to observe a greater variety of principals' activities and to search for their consequences, both of which seem particularly important when existing conceptual and operational definitions of "effectiveness" remain inadequate (Cameron & Whetten, 1983; Goodman & Pennings, 1977). Also, similar behaviors exhibited in disparate organizations stand out in comparative studies. They provide fertile ground for speculation and the emergence of grounded theory (Meckstroth, 1975; Przeworski & Teune, 1970). Lastly, the comparison of principal behaviors exhibited in varying contexts allowed us to examine the extent to which those activities are tied to specific contexts.

Thus, we sought urban, suburban, and rural districts with schools that served populations of students that varied by racial and SES composition. The proximity of school districts to universities from which field researchers could be recruited further constrained the selection procedure. Three types of districts were identified:

A. Urban Districts: We identified as urban those districts with an enrollment exceeding 45,000 students. Typically, a district in this category would have an extremely large and highly differentiated administrative staff. One district in the study employed 97 principals. The schools in these districts serviced extremely diverse student groups and faced problems associated with multilingual instructional programs, dwindling funds, and multiracial student groups.

B. Suburban Districts: Suburban districts also served large metropolitan areas but typically enrolled up to 24,000 students. Most, but not all, of the schools in these districts were free of many of the problems typical of inner-city institutions. In contrast to schools within urban districts, suburban schools served families of higher SES. They served neighborhoods that were more stable, and there was less transiency among the student population. One of the participating suburban districts employed 37 principals. Its student population was growing, and it was also expanding both staff and building resources.

C. Rural Districts: The rural settings selected for the study provided a dramatic counterpoint to the other settings. A typical rural district in our study employed nine principals and served approximately 3,000 students. Their small size mandated that school services be shared extensively among buildings. The communities encompassed by the districts were typically low to lower middle SES. Their racial composition typically included large White majorities and small numbers of Blacks and migrant Mexicans.

Selection of Principals Within the Districts: Central office personnel in two of our districts played key roles in the identification of the participating schools. They were asked to suggest schools with "successful" principals, where achievement test scores were stable or had risen over successive years. In another, an associate superintendent approved a list of schools suggested by the district's consultant for principal in-service training. In yet another, the superintendent identified the candidates personally and contacted them regarding the study. In most instances, more principals and schools were identified than the study required and principals were encouraged to decline if they were not genuinely interested in the project. The proximity of schools to universities was the most immediate constraint in the rural districts. Initial recommendations for rural districts and principal candidates were made by personnel in the state office of education who were familiar with such schools.

In all instances, principal recommendations were made on the basis of reputation. It is important to note that central office personnel were concerned about presenting their districts in the best possible light. This priority preempted our request to identify candidates by more systematic means such as examining achievement-score trends. We were continually told that participation was a district decision. There was no room for negotiation. Fortunately, the principals who were identified represented schools that varied substantially in student composition, transiency, and test scores.

Program staff described the project to each of the nominated principals. In some instances, the same presentation was made to staffs at the request of the principals. Enthusiasm for the work, staff permission, race and gender of the principal, and race and SES composition of the student population became primary factors for selecting the participants. Although student achievement scores for all schools in one of the urban districts were examined, we could draw no conclusions about the "effectiveness" of those schools. (See Rowan et al., 1983 for a complete discussion of the methodological and substantive problems of such an approach). Salient characteristics of participating principals and features of their schools and communities, based on preliminary data, are displayed in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1: Comparative Characteristics of Urban Schools

SCHOOL	Ele. #1	Ele. #2	Ele. #3	Jr. H. #4	Jr.H. #5
Principal Sex	F	F	M	F	F
Principal Race	B	B	B	B	W
Principal Age	55	47	42	45	63
Yrs. of Principal Experience	7	9	8	3	12
Number of Teachers	27	47	10	45	50
Teacher Experience	8% 1-3 yrs 5% 4-6 yrs 6% 7-8 yrs 80% 10+ yrs	2% 1-3 yrs 8% 4-6 yrs 10% 7-10 yrs 80% 10+ yrs	10% 7-10 yrs 90% 10+ yrs	90% 7-10 yrs 10% other	16% 1-3 yrs 16% 4-6 yrs 26% 7-10 yrs 42% 10+ yrs
Number of Students	574	1004	300	781	1200
Median Student SES	2% professional 6% semi-professional 26% skilled semi-skilled 66% other	16% professional 22% semi-professional 36% skilled semi-skilled 17% unskilled 6% unknown	15% professional 70% semi-professional 15% skilled semi-skilled	Low SES*	20% professional
Student Body Racial Composition	50.7% Black 13.2% Spanish/ Surname 15.8% Asian 11.1% White 1.2% other	49.6% Black 38.9% Spanish/ Surname 9.4% Asian 1.3% White .8% other	22.8% Black 2.0% Spanish/ Surname 3.9% Asian 71.3% White	99.8% Black 1.0% White	42.2% Black 5.0% Spanish/ Surname 30.7% Asian 18.6% White 4.5% other

*Data will be upgraded as school reporting cycle permits.

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Table 2: Comparative Characteristics of Suburban Schools

SCHOOL	Ele. #1	Ele. #2	Ele. #3	Middle #4	
Principal Sex	M	M	F	M	
Principal Race	W	W	W	W	
Principal Age	64	45	51	45	
Yrs. of Principal Experience	31	9	5	10	
Number of Teachers	23	22	37	34	
Teacher Experience	17% 1-3 yrs 14% 4-6 yrs 26% 7-10 yrs 43% 10+ yrs	5% 4-6 yrs 10% 7-10 yrs 85% 10+ yrs	11% 1-3 yrs 8% 4-6 yrs 81% 10+ yrs	100% 10+ yrs	
Number of Students	640	632	600	752	
Median Student SES	*12.4% AFDC	60% professional 10% semi-professional 20% skilled 0% AFDC	3% professional 7% semi-professional 80% skilled semi-skilled 10% unknown	*unknown	
Student Body Racial Composition	4.4% Black 16.4% Spanish surname 15.2% Asian 56.4% White 6.5% American Indian 1.0% other	1.0% Black 1.0% Spanish surname 1.0% Asian 97.0% White	5.0% Black 20.0% Spanish surname 5.0% Asian 60.0% White 10.0% other	3.0% Black 18.0% Spanish/ surname 2.0% Asian 76.0% White 1.0% American Indian	

*Data will be upgraded as school reporting cycle permits.

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Table 3: Comparative Characteristics of Rural Schools

SCHOOL	Ele. #1	Ele. #2	Jr. H. #3		
Principal Sex	M	F	F		
Principal Race	W	W	W		
Principal Age	55	55	42		
Yrs. of Principal Experience	16	3	2		
Number of Teachers	19	8.5	17		
Teacher Experience	100% 10+ yrs	75% 1-3 yrs 25% 10+ yrs	70% 1-3 yrs 30 4-6 yrs		
Number of Students	400	168	285		
Median Student SES	* middle to low income	* low income	* middle to low income		
Student Body Racial Composition	95% White 5% other	95% White 5% other	95% White 5% other		

*Data will be upgraded as school reporting cycle permits.

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Procedures

To gain the understanding we sought, we developed a data set that would portray the way work was organized in each of the school settings, the behavior of the participants in the settings, and the meanings that those participants assigned to their actions. The field study design included two phases. In Phase I, we focused on the principals, using activities that would capture the sources of influence most salient to them, their strategies, and the activities they used to realize their goals. In Phase II, we maintained contact with the principals, but turned to other school personnel and examined classroom activities to search for the consequences of the principals' actions. In addition, we developed and used an instrument to capture the structural features of each school's instructional organization. Throughout the study, school documents were collected at the sites. The specific procedures that were used in each of these phases are described below.

Phase I Procedures

School Description Instrument and Initial Interview: Our researchers began their work by distributing to principals school description instruments that provided orientation to the schools' facilities, staffs, and programs. The instruments were used to record information about principals' personal attributes, the ages and sizes of their school buildings, and the number and roles of staff members. Information was also gathered about the grade levels in the school, student ethnicity, and the approximate socioeconomic standing of students' families. Finally, principals were asked to report on their relationships with central office personnel.

Researchers then conducted long, semi-structured interviews with their principals. Principals were encouraged to discuss those parts of their personal and professional histories that had influenced their career paths. They were asked to describe their schools' communities, their districts, and other institutions or organizations that had affected their work. They were asked to discuss their students and their own aspirations for them. Finally, they were asked to describe the school climates that they hoped to attain or maintain and the nature of the instructional organizations they led or hoped to implement. Field researchers also requested and received building tours during these first outings to the school sites.

The Shadow and Reflective Interview: The shadow and reflective interview was a two-step process. The first portion provided an "outside" view of principals' daily activities; the second provided a glimpse of some of the inner meanings principals attached to their behavior and school events. To accomplish the shadow, our observers followed principals through a portion of the school day, assuming as unobtrusive a posture as possible. Principals were shadowed during tours of their

buildings, entering classrooms, libraries, and offices, patrolling lunchrooms and play yards, and attending meetings in or out of the schools. The field observers recorded the substance and form of the principals' interactions in lengthy field notes, which often totalled 20 to 30 pages for a three- or four-hour shadow observation.

The reflective interview, the second part of the procedure, required field observers to organize their shadow notes and share substantial portions of these notes with the principals they had followed. During these "reflections," principals were encouraged to comment on the events described, and to add histories and interpretations to the descriptions.

The information gathered through these procedures was integrated with observers' personal comments and interpretations. A four-hour shadow, followed by a two-hour reflective interview, would produce a 30- or 40-page typed field record. The shadow/reflective interview procedure proved so important in gaining an understanding of the work of principals that we wish to comment on this process further. A "Special Note" follows the descriptions of the remaining procedures.

The Cruise: The purpose of the cruise was to allow the field researcher to become familiar with the broader organization. This orientation provided a framework into which smaller, more intensely studied pieces might fit. The researcher might also have found that observations made during the cruise were suggestive of areas where future, more systematic effort could best be spent.

Cruises included observations in classrooms, lunchrooms, libraries, front offices, play yards, and teachers' lounges. Descriptions of the physical appearance of these varying arenas of activity were recorded in the field notes, as were the form and substance of interactions between the persons observed. Occasionally, principals would be seen passing through these areas, giving observers unscheduled opportunities to watch the principals in action.

Field researchers attended school assemblies, special student performances, faculty and committee meetings, and meetings between guidance counselors, students, and parents. These multiple occasions provided chances to glimpse the school organizations on occasions that were otherwise difficult to schedule. This flexibility in the cruise procedure enabled observers to capitalize on serendipitous events. Casual conversations with teachers, students, aides, secretaries, and sometimes parents or community members were also part of the cruise process. These encounters allowed observers to identify key staff members and to arrange more formal interviews with them whenever it seemed appropriate and useful. In all instances, researchers were careful not to interfere with the natural flow of school activities. During cruises, observers jotted short field notes as they moved about the school and tape-recorded

their summary observations later. These data were used to prepare carefully written cruise records.

Cruise data provided independent snapshots of the work people did within the school and the locations in which it occurred. Combined with the shadow and reflective interview data, however, these loosely collected pictures of school life were tied together by the words and deeds of the principals. They became illustrations and counter-instances of the principals' accounts of their own work and its effects. As such, the cruise was an important validation tool.

Site Visit: During periods when field researchers were not involved in regularly scheduled research activities, they maintained contact with their schools through site visits, which were made on a drop-in basis. These one- or two-hour visits were spent touring the school and conversing with the principal and staff about events that occurred in the observer's absence. Written summaries of these visits were prepared.

Phase II Procedures

Classroom Observations and Reflective Interviews: Classroom observations were performed to search for evidence of a principal's influence on the instructional program of his or her school. Each observation was scheduled to capture one entire class lesson from beginning to end. Observers first mapped the arrangement of furniture in classrooms and noted outstanding features such as use of color, bulletin boards, and displays. With this map, they recorded the number of students and adults in the class, indicated participants' locations in the room, and noted each person's gender and ethnicity. During the actual instruction, observers wrote copious notes describing what was happening in the classroom: Who was involved and where an activity was taking place; the form and substance of the teacher's instructions to students; what kinds of evaluative feedback students received; what kinds of choices were permitted and what types of responsibilities were given to students; how students interacted; when, why, and how students moved about the classroom; and the types of instructional materials used.

The second portion of the classroom observation process paralleled the reflective interview procedure used with principals after shadow activities. In this instance, teachers were interviewed as soon as possible following the observations. The purpose of this reflection was to establish information about the lesson that could not be directly observed: the overall instructional strategy that the teacher followed day to day; the teacher's thoughts and strategies as the lesson progressed; the content of the students' work that could not be ascertained without interrupting the students. These post-lesson interviews allowed clarification about instructional materials and grouping arrangements, enabled inquiries about specialists and pullout programs (if students had been observed entering and leaving the

classroom during the instructional period), and confirmed (or contradicted) notable regularities in witnessed events.

For most schools, these class observation processes were carried out in approximately one half of the classrooms. In two of the schools from urban districts, however, fewer than one third of the classrooms were observed because of the number of classes. The intent was to survey the nature of instruction at various grade levels in all of the basic instructional areas and, at a minimum, to develop a feel for the enrichment or special kinds of instruction in each school's program.

Structured Interviews With Teachers: Because of the time limitations that teachers worked under, structured interviews were typically carried out with teachers who had not been observed and/or teachers who were particularly central in the school's social system. These interviews were conducted to supplement the classroom observation data. They probed teachers' views about their work with students and about how the principal affected their work. The interview protocol encouraged teachers to discuss ideals and realities about their work, their schools, and their principals. Specifically, the interviews covered instructional goals, instructional approaches, teacher satisfaction with their roles and the role of the principal, and what teachers believed principals knew about classroom practices and about student outcomes. In addition, teachers were asked how curriculum was coordinated schoolwide and whether there were other key instructional leaders in the school besides the principal.

At the conclusion of these interviews, a school features inventory was used to record the teachers' perspectives on structural and procedural aspects of a school's programs and policies. The instrument addressed professional development, school improvement, discipline policies, grade-level or other performance expectations, student evaluation, promotion, and the role of parents in the schools. (This interview protocol is contained in Appendix B.)

Student Interviews: A semi-structured interview was used to capture students' perspectives about the role of the principal in their schools. Students were nominated by principals and other school staff on the basis of the nominee's gender, ethnicity, and participation style (academic, social, dependent, rebellious, or isolated) in order to provide a representative sample of the school's student population.

These children were interviewed individually about what they saw their principals do, the nature of their interactions with their principals, how they believed their principals helped them, where they commonly saw their principals, and what they thought a "perfect" principal might be. Finally, they were asked to compare their current principal to other principals they had known. (See Appendix C for the Student Interview protocol.)

Instructional Organization Instrument: This lengthy instrument was developed to capture the manner in which each of the schools was organized for the delivery of instruction. Its purpose in the study was to provide baseline data from which the schools' instructional management patterns could be compared.

This instrument contained three main sections. Part I probed seven topics: a) school-level grouping patterns; b) assignment of students to classrooms; c) across-classroom grouping; d) extracurricular activities; e) curriculum materials; f) curricular objectives; and g) information management systems.

Part II provided principals with a more open-ended opportunity to discuss policies that constrained or shaped instruction at their schools. Twelve specific areas were addressed: a) grouping within classrooms; b) pacing or student advancement; c) student promotion; d) student evaluation; e) teaching techniques; f) schedules; g) homework; h) use of instructional specialists; i) discipline; j) staff in-service; k) assignment of students to school clubs or organizations; and l) teacher evaluation.

Part III requested that the principal generate two lists which showed the extent of delegation of instructional and organizational activities: a) The first identified all those individuals at the school with instructional responsibilities and indicated their roles and tenures at the school; b) the second provided the names and members of all committees that served the school. In addition, this list included descriptions of the responsibilities and authority that had been vested in each committee. (Appendix D is the Instructional Organization Instrument.)

Special Note on the Shadow and Reflective Interview Procedure: Although the shadow and reflective interview procedure provided novel data about the work of principals which led us to new understandings about how principals exercise leadership in schools, its implementation was no small accomplishment for the field workers. We learned in our pilot work that researchers would become exhausted if the procedure was used for an entire day. The quantity of field notes would fall off sharply in afternoon hours, and the necessary task of reading, clarifying, and expanding 30 to 40 pages of hastily written notes at the end of the day proved excessively demanding. To alleviate this problem, we elected in the yearlong studies to exercise this procedure for three- or four-hour periods. We instructed the field team to distribute their shadows carefully to capture samples of morning and afternoon activities and to rotate their observations through different days of the week.

The reflective interview, the second portion of this procedure, also proved demanding, requiring immediate action by field researchers after each shadow episode. In this related activity, researchers read large portions of the previous day's field records to their respective principals, allowing the

principal to "reflect" on the record and to add histories and interpretations to the acts that had been witnessed.

These reflective conversations were important corroborative activities for both the researchers and the principals. The activity allowed observers to correct inaccuracies in their records or to note multiple interpretations of events. The reflective interviews also provided opportunities to question subjects about connections between the acts that had been observed and the stories that had been related in previous conversations, such as the initial interviews.

We discovered that principals were particularly fond of this procedure. It allowed them to obtain a rare, adult view of their own actions and workaday world. Thus, the reflective interviews provided them, in a nonthreatening, nonevaluative way, with data that they could use to assess their own behavior.

This fascination with the reflective technique provided a procedural handicap. Principals responded to the shadow records in such detail that notes describing an hour of principal activities could take an hour to discuss. We had to limit these conversations by abridging the records as they were read to the principals, covering only events that seemed most relevant to their roles in instruction or that required further clarification. The principals' lengthy reflections became shorter as the study progressed because most of our subjects began to reflect to their observers as events progressed during the shadow days. Reflection became reflex, triggered by the observers' presence.

The handwritten field notes and documents that accrued during a shadow day, audio recordings of the reflective interviews, and the researcher's comments or interpretive asides were consolidated into an integrated record of the two-day procedure. This record, illustrated in Figure 2, is prepared in a four column format. The first column begins in the left margin and contains the time notations that were recorded during the observations. These times provide accurate guides to the chronology of events as they had occurred and approximate guides to the duration of episodes. The next column is reserved for interpretive comments made during or after observations. These asides are further separated from other text on the page by parentheses and are identified with the observer's initials. The third column contains transcribed or paraphrased text from the reflective interviews. Actual quotations from audio recordings are indicated by the use of the observer's or subject's initials followed by a colon. Finally, the fourth column, which fully occupies the right-hand half of the page, relates the observer's descriptive narrative of the behaviors and settings recorded during the actual shadow day. The interpretive asides in the second column and the portions of reflective interview in the third column are arranged on the page in such a way that each insertion follows the interaction about which it comments.

Time Column

Interpretive Aside Column

Reflective Interview Column

Descriptive Narrative Column

Alexander
4/22/82

12:45 — GA returns to his office, where Ann Flynn has left some student papers for him to read. He reads these and writes a note in response. He goes to the teachers' lounge where he finds Ann, gives her the papers and the note, and comments to the effect that he really enjoyed the papers.

GL: Is it typical for people to give you examples of student work?

GA: Yeah, I would say. You can initiate it in the faculty lounge. A lot of teachers bring their things to the faculty lounge, so when you're in there you ask them what they're doing: "What's that? That looks like a composition." So you take a look at it and they know that you're interested in those kinds of things. So they will drop them by.

(Here are examples both of GA's positive reinforcement of teachers' work activities and of his fast turn-around time in handling matters. Remember his calling the district office immediately about the grievance matter that one of the teachers brought up earlier in the day. GL)

1:05 — Back in his office, GA returns a phone call from the district office.

Figure 2: Sample Shadow Record

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The totality of this record presents a view of the work of principals that is vivid and real. It invites readers to become involved in the account, to reflect on their own experiences, and to generate their own interpretations. It is a view of the ordinary, of a commonplace set of facts that Homans (1950) stated "is surprisingly hard to collect; that demands an observer who is not so much himself a part of the situation that he cannot view it with a fresh eye . . ." (p. 25).

The vividness of the field record results from its scene-by-scene construction of setting and action, a dramaturgical form typified in the work of Arensberg and Kimball (1940). Further, through the insertion of the reflective interview excerpts into the flow of the behavior account, multiple perspectives on single events are presented. This integration adds the personal elements of the principals' ideals, strategies, and insights to the simpler chronological and descriptive account.

This observer/subject or two-perspective account presents an image of an agent who is guided by personal experiences and the beliefs at work in a complex social field. Beittel (1973) produced this blend of action and motive in his laboratory study of artists at work. He speculated on the usefulness and difficulty of implementing such a strategy in the study of social settings. We believe we have successfully employed his "multiple-consciousness narrative" (p. 39) technique in this study of principals in schools.

Further, the use of interpretive asides (personal comments made by the researcher about an observation) adds the field observer's personal reactions to the data set in a clear and discrete form. As such, these asides are not confused with more "objective" data and yield another important perspective on the setting and action (Bruyn, 1966). The interpretive asides are also the place where the field researchers speculate about patterns and processes that they observed and generate hunches or, more formally, propositions as they encountered events. In this way, ideas accrued in the record solidified in a manner that warranted future attention and allowed one's first guess to be compared with later guesses as familiarity with the setting and actors grew. This is a strategy for seeking explanation that L. M. Smith (1978) described as "competing theories" (p. 332).

In an organized and interesting form, the integrated shadow and reflective interview record provides data about the principal that were derived in multiple ways. Their very form accomplishes the "triangulation," an enhancement strategy for qualitative studies, that Denzin (1970) recommends. In some instances, triangulation can be an important validation tool, but in practice it often creates divergent interpretations of events (Sieber, 1980).

If one expects some "ultimate truth" to emerge from a study, this multiple reality will be disturbing. As we have stated, the philosophical underpinning for our study is phenomenological. We

expect diverse interpretations of events and believe, as Watzlawick (1977) stated:

> The most dangerous delusion of all is that there is only one reality. What there are, in fact, are many different versions of reality, some of which are contradictory, but all of which are the results of communication and not reflections of eternal, objective truths. (p. 1)

Importantly, finding contradictions in the data can heighten observers' awareness of critical events and issues in the setting (Smith & Dwyer, 1979).

The shadow and reflective interview record is the substantive backbone of our data, but it alone does not provide a sufficient view of school principals' work. Although it combines the perspectives of the principals and their observers, the business of schooling is carried out by many other actors who interact with, and are variously affected by, the principal. The work of these important others is carried out in many locations throughout the building and is performed primarily during a principal's absence from those settings. Thus, any adequate assessment of a principal's impact on schools must consider these other actors, places, and times as well. Despite the importance of the shadow and reflective interview to the study of principals, it must be part of a larger, systematized plan of action that discovers other views of schools and the effects of principals' work in them.

Data

The application of these field procedures in each of the 12 settings over the course of one year produced a prodigious data set. Eighty-two hundred pages of single-spaced and typed field records describe 1,500 hours of observation and direct contact with principals, teachers, and students in the settings, and indirect contact with parents and district personnel in some cases. Table 4 specifies the numbers and types of records in this set and presents the totals of the number of records that describe each school as well as the totals for each type of record.

Analysis

The project data provided the opportunity to develop rich descriptive portraits of individual principals shaping instructional programs under particular contextual constraints and opportunities. In order to utilize the entire data set, several phases of reading and categorizing the data were undertaken.

Principal Action Analysis: This work began with the analysis of records from the shadows and reflective interviews, cruises,

	Urban Elementary #1	Urban Elementary #2	Urban Elementary #3	Urban Elementary #4	Urban Intermediate #1	Urban Intermediate #2	Suburban Elementary #1	Suburban Elementary #2	Suburban Intermediate #1	Rural Elementary #1	Rural Elementary #2	Rural Intermediate #1	Total
Initial Interview and School Description Instrument	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
Shadow and Reflective Interview	11	8	7	4	7	7	5	7	1	4	3	4	64
Cruise	13	11	4	5	7	8	14	10	6	2	3	5	89
Stop Visit and Summary Observation	6	11	1	0	1	25	4	0	0	0	0	0	48
Classroom Observation	12	16	12	9	13	8	10	13	9	8	6	9	124
Structured Interview with Teacher and School Features Inventory	12	11	10	10	10	12	9	9	5	6	5	9	108
Student Interview	19	20	16	15	23	19	16	16	13	15	21	17	210
Instructional Organizational Instrument	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
TOTAL RECORDS/SITE	75	77	52	45	63	81	60	56	37	37	41	46	689

Table 4: Description of Data Set

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and site visits. As in later stages, this work was conducted within the framework of grounded theory and the "comparative analysis" strategy of Glaser and Strauss (1967, pp. 21-22). Previous project work had highlighted the potency of the principal's routine daily activities for instructional leadership and had identified a common core of activities that included monitoring, controlling and exchanging information, planning, interacting with students, hiring and training staff, and overseeing building maintenance (Dwyer et al., 1983, p. 53). With these activities in mind, staff members read and reread several types of data records from a number of the schools to generate categories of activities that would capture the behaviors of the principals.

The strategies of "progressive focusing" (Hamilton et al., 1977, p. 15) and "collapsing outlines" (L. M. Smith, 1978, p. 339) reduced lists of behaviors to a set of nine. In some instances, the resulting categories are deliberately general. For example, previous research has identified the principal's role as a communicator as an important one (e.g., Dwyer et al., 1983; Martin & Willower, 1981; Morris et al., 1984). So, although project staff saw many forms of communicating in the data (such as informing, conferring, commenting, suggesting, persuading, advising, questioning), the decision was made to retain the more general category for the first stage of analysis rather than try to distinguish among the different forms.

Similarly, staff members grappled with the problem of attempting to distinguish between instances of activities that they had labeled "scheduling," "allocating resources," and "organizing." As examples from the data were read aloud in meetings, and the boundaries between those labels could not be clearly specified, the decision was made to begin with one category for all three types of behavior. The nine categories of principals' behaviors tagged in the analysis were:

Goal Setting & Planning: Defining or determining future desired outcomes. Making decisions about, or formulating means for, achieving those ends.

Monitoring: Reviewing, watching, checking, being present without a formal evaluation intended.

Evaluating: Appraising or judging with regard to persons, programs, material, etc. May include providing feedback.

Communicating: Various forms of verbal exchange, including greeting, informing, counseling, commenting, etc. Also includes forms of nonverbal communication such as physical contacts, gestures, and facial expressions.

Scheduling, Allocating Resources, & Organizing: Making decisions about allocations of time, space, materials, personnel, and energy. Arranging or coordinating projects, programs, or events.

Staffing: Hiring and placement of teaching staff, specialists, and support personnel.

Modeling: Demonstrating teaching techniques or strategies of interaction for teachers, other staff, parents, or students.

Governing: Decision making with regard to policy. Legislating, enforcing policy or rules.

Filling In: Substituting for another staff member (nurse, maintenance person, secretary, teacher) on a temporary basis.

Besides wanting to identify a set of activities that would describe the behavior of principals, project staff members also wished to discern from the data--either implicitly or explicitly--why principals did what they did. Again, previous project work, both conceptual and empirical, provided guidance. This work indicated that principals directed their actions at elements of their schools' instructional organization, climate, and external environment as they attempted to shape the day-to-day operations of the organization in the pursuit of their desired outcomes (Bossert et al., 1982; Dwyer et al., 1983).

Other researchers have also taken note of the limitations of studies of principals' behaviors that have not addressed the questions of consequences of principals' actions (Greenfield, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Project staff regarded the strategy of specifying such reasons or "targets" of principals' behaviors as a first step in identifying consequences of their actions. Again, working directly with several types of data from several sites, staff members developed the following categories of targets:

Work Structure: All components related to the task of delivering instruction.

Staff Relations: Outcomes concerning the feelings and/or personal needs of individual staff members or groups of staff members.

Student Relations: Outcomes concerning the feelings, attitudes, or personal needs (academic, social, or psychological) of students.

Safety & Order: Features of the physical organization, rules, and procedures of the school that influence the safety of members and the capacity of members to carry out their work.

Plant & Equipment: Elements of the physical plant such as the building, grounds, audiovisual equipment, office machines, etc.

Community Relations: Outcomes concerning the attitudes and involvement of parents or other community members.

Institutional Relations: Outcomes related to the district office, other schools, or other formal organizations outside the school.

Institutional Ethos: School culture or spirit. May refer to features of the school program or to a "tone" that contributes to the school's unique identity and constitutes shared meaning among members of the school organization.

The nine types of activities and eight categories of targets form a matrix of 72 cells. This matrix was used as a tool for beginning the analysis of principals' activities. The intention was to look systematically at the actions of the principals who participated in this study and to profile their actions in a way that would permit comparisons across the varied settings. All of the field records for cruises, site visits, shadows, and reflective interviews with each of the principals were tagged.

The unit of analysis for this portion of the process was termed an "episode," defined as a discrete and bounded behavioral incident that contained both an action and a target. Thus, if the field record read, "Principal sits at desk and writes," the reader would not tag that behavior unless information from the reflective interview or a later portion of the record clarified both the nature of the writing (e.g., communicating, scheduling) and the target (e.g., staff relations, work structure).

Similarly, statements by the principals in reflective interviews were tagged as episodes only if they referred to specific and recent events. A principal's statement that he or she believes it is important to schedule opportunities for parents to talk with teachers would not be tagged because the statement lacks the needed target. If the principal added, however, that he or she had arranged for two back-to-school nights to provide a forum for parents and teachers to meet, the episode would be complete and could be tagged.

An important characteristic of principals' actions that was obvious in our data was its polychronic nature, i.e., principals

often accomplish more than one thing with a single action. For example, in disciplining a student, a principal may be attending not only to the business of enforcing school rules but may also be concerned about the student's self-esteem. These multiple meanings of the principal's action may be contained within the observer's description of the behavior from the shadow activity or from the combination of the observer's notes and the principal's reflective comments. In either instance, such an episode would be considered an instance of multiple meanings and would be tagged with two codes.

Although this tagging process was complex and time-consuming, it was necessary in two respects. First, the tagging system provided a sophisticated indexing system to our large data set. Episodes could be retrieved easily for the construction of the case studies. Second, the tagging process was also a sorting mechanism that provided hints about what principals emphasized or considered most important. Cells in the 72-box matrix filled at different rates, offering a first glimpse of how these principals accomplished their work--even how they defined their work. Careful review of the data that accumulated in each cell revealed the nuances of principals' activities that helped to describe their approaches to school leadership and would, in a later analysis phase, allow cross-site comparisons.

Analysis of the Instructional System: The analysis of the instructional organization of the schools in this study is an extension of the "multi-dimensional" view of organizational effectiveness sought by the program (Rowan et al., 1983). In developing the categories for this second part of the analysis, our aim was to describe as richly as possible all of the variables operating within the school's social and technical systems that affected student instruction. Furthermore, we wanted to show the corresponding relationship of these variables to the management behaviors and actions of the principals.

We began this phase of the analysis asking numerous questions of the data, wanting first to define the technical context of instruction at each school. For example, we wished to understand how physical spaces, time, staff, and students were coordinated and arranged to make instruction possible. Further, we wanted to know what was the instructional delivery system in the school? How did it come to exist and why did it exist in the form that it did? Finally, we wanted to know the extent to which the staffs shared understandings about instructional policies and procedures among themselves and with other important actors in the community or in the school district.

We developed the following categories from several reviews of our data, eventually tagging for each school the appropriate portions of the structured interviews with teachers and principals, the Instructional Organization Instrument, the School Features Inventory, classroom observations, and summary observations. For each category, answers to "what?" and "how?" questions were sought.

Overarching Goals: 1. Academic Goals: Principal Viewpoint & Teacher Viewpoint--What are these goals? Who created them? To whom do they apply? How are they viewed, accepted, and utilized in the instructional framework of the school? Is there a consensus or are there divergences among staff members or between staff members and the principal about the aims of instruction?

2. Nonacademic Goals: Principal Viewpoint & Teacher Viewpoint--What are these goals? Who created them? To whom do they apply? How are they viewed, accepted, and utilized in the instructional framework of the school? Is there a consensus or are there divergences among staff members or between staff members and the principal about the aims of instruction?

School Improvement Goals: What are the general goals for improving the school? How were these formulated? Do the teachers know what they are?

Overall Structure and Organization:
1. Classroom Structure: physical description; grade-level organization; across-class grouping; classroom assignments; staff differentiation. How do these factors delimit the possibilities for instruction?

2. Special Program Structure: description of special projects (federally, locally, or privately funded); types of specialists; models of discipline or pedagogy adopted to facilitate instruction.

Curriculum Objectives: What content is taught in the classroom (this includes specific objectives, grade-level expectations, and issues of time allocation)? Who determines curriculum policy? Is there a difference between formal policy and daily practice?

Curriculum Textbooks: What materials are used for instruction? Who decides and how are these materials decided upon? What is considered "standard" and are supplementary materials allowed? How often are either of these used? What type of subject matter do curriculum textbooks cover?

Social Curriculum: What kinds of activities and routine events are planned solely for the

enrichment of student social outcomes? Are these structured into the daily schedule of classroom activities, or do they happen as special isolated events? How does the teacher or the principal directly or indirectly affect the psychological well-being of the students in an attempt to produce better performance?

Assignment of Teachers: How are teachers assigned to the classroom? Is there a formal or informal hiring or firing policy?

Within-class Grouping: How does grouping occur within the classroom? How is instruction paced? What are the criteria for determining student groups and pacing?

Pedagogy--Teaching Techniques: How does instruction take place? Do some teaching techniques come from special pedagogical philosophies? Is there consensus among teachers in their teaching strategies? Or is this determined individually? What are some of the typical procedures for delivering instruction in the classroom?

Pedagogy--Homework: Is homework required? What is it and how is it distributed? What kinds of materials are used?

Discipline: How and how well does the teacher maintain classroom discipline? What forms of rewards, punishment, or reinforcements are used? What are the norms for noise and movement within the classroom or about the school?

Testing and Evaluation of Students: How are students tested and evaluated? What records are kept and who looks at them? How often does testing occur? How much weight do tests carry in the evaluation of students? What tests are used? What other criteria are employed to determine correct grade-level placement of students?

Testing and Grades: What formal policies and practices are employed for grading students?

Testing and Promotion: What are the procedures for student promotion or retention at the end of the year?

Evaluation of Teachers: What are the formal procedures for evaluating teachers? What do

the teachers think of this system? What kind of feedback do teachers get from their principal concerning their job performance? What roles do parents have in the evaluation of teachers?

In-service: What in-service and staff development opportunities are available for teachers? Are these supported by the principal or the district? What impact do they have on teachers' instructional practices?

Home Communication: How does communication take place between teachers and parents or the principal and parents? What are the major issues surrounding these contacts? Are there efforts by the staff to maintain contact with parents? Are parents accessible?

Home in the School: Do parents participate in the classroom, and if so, in what capacity and how often? Is the local parent population generally active and supportive of the school?

Institutional Policy: What federal, state, and/or district policies exist, and how do they influence instruction?

Building Policy: What building-level policies exist and what are their influences on instruction?

Principal: How does the principal influence instruction at the school, both formally in his or her institutional role and informally in the sharing of his or her beliefs and values?

Teachers: What are the influences of teachers on the program of the school, including their work on committees?

Other Very Important People: How do other influential members of the school staff or community affect the program of the school?

Resources: How does the availability or scarcity of resources affect the program of the school?

Self: What beliefs, personal histories, and/or personal opinions affect the school program and how?

History: What background circumstances about the school or its setting add explanatory power to the story?

The data from each of the studies provided different answers to the questions within these categories and, in some instances, generated new questions. Again, the intent of this effort was to organize the data so that we could fully describe the social and technical context within which each of the principals made his or her decisions. As we expected, data were plentiful in some of these categories and sparse in others, depending on the relevance of the category to each of the sites.

The two analytic procedures--tagging of principal behaviors and tagging of social and technical aspects of school environment and context--resulted in the identification of thousands of discrete episodes which were tagged with one or more of the verbs and targets and categories that we have described. In order to facilitate the construction of case studies and later cross-site analyses, these episodes and their attendant tags were stored in a Hewlett-Packard 3000 minicomputer, using the Image/Query data-base management program. This system allowed us to retrieve all text data relevant to any case or topic for perusal and eventual use in the writing of the program's monographs about principals and instructional management. This computerized indexing and retrieval system allowed easier access to the abundant data set that had been compiled from our field efforts, resulting in an ability to create far richer descriptions and more thorough analyses than would have been possible with any of the sorting-by-hand procedures more commonly employed in studies of this nature.

Delineation of Principals' Roles in Instructional Management: To recapitulate, the purpose of this analysis of the program's data was to describe carefully and richly the role of the principal in instructional leadership and management in several of the schools examined by this study. Because of two important implications drawn from the pilot study--the importance of principals' routine behaviors and the importance of the broad context of instruction (see Figure 3)--the first steps in this analysis were: a) to examine and characterize what principals did in their schools on a day-to-day basis; and b) to describe fully the instructional milieu of their organizations. The final analytic step for the individual case studies was to draw from these two arrays linkages between principals' actions and the environments in which they worked. As the model in Figure 3 illustrates, we believe that aspects of their environments were both antecedents and consequences of the principals' actions.

This last step was begun by electronically sorting the data, using the resulting collages of information to describe or illustrate the nature of each school's community, institutional network, instructional climate, instructional organization, and expectations for students. Each principal's action matrix was then carefully examined for episodes that would reveal the

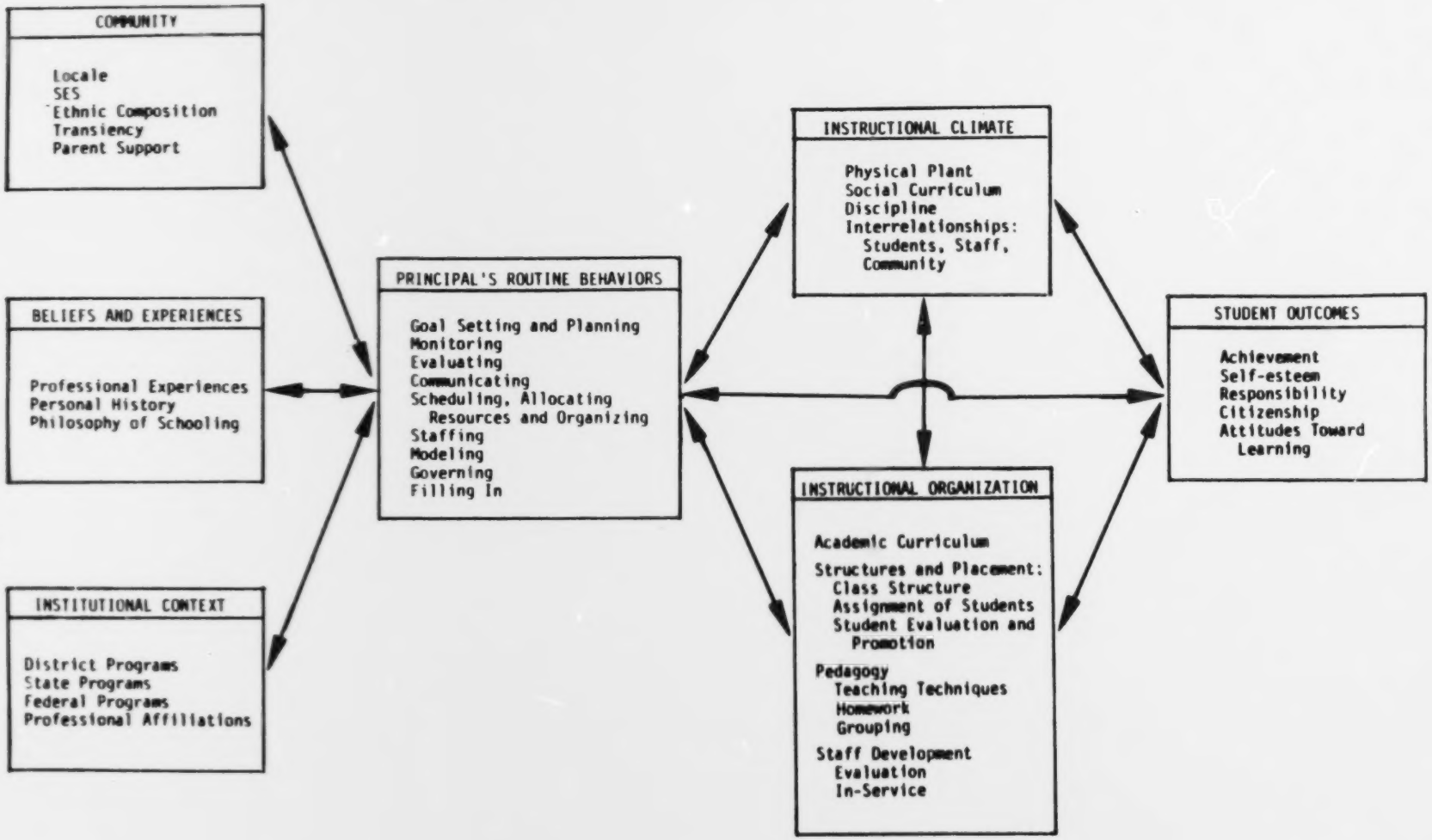

Figure 3: The Principal's Role in Instructional Management

Principals can understand and influence the varied elements of their organizations through the performance of routine activities. Their success hinges on their ability to connect their actions to an overarching perspective of their school settings and their aspirations for students.

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relationships between the principal and the many facets of his or her context. For example, if we found in the description of a school's instructional organization a newly adopted reading program, we would examine the record of the principal's behaviors to establish whether the principal had any role in that adoption. If we found any linkages, we would describe what those linkages were. Similarly, if an examination of the action matrix for any principal revealed a very common behavior, we would search the context descriptions for explanations.

Our lengthy, open-ended interviews with principals and staffs, the documents that we gathered in the settings, and the several instruments we employed also provided important historical perspectives that contributed to this analysis. In many instances, reasons for activities of the principals resided in events that had occurred long before our arrival in the settings. Lastly, our conversations with staff about their beliefs and attitudes about children, education, and their roles in society also revealed important antecedents for aspects of the school contexts that we described.

These awarenesses grew as the data were collected and reported. Subsequent analysis and frequent conversations among project staff began to reveal themes unique to some of the sites and common to others. Ultimately, this process led to the generation of mini-theories or "stories" about the settings and the principals' roles in them that seemed to capture the whole of our observers' experiences and records.

Suppositions were argued or validated as data continued to be collected or revealed in the analysis proceedings. Problems and explanations became more and more focused. As discrete bits of data were found to be redundant, copious records imploded, leaving well-illustrated themes. These are the processes described in the literature on the analysis of ethnographic data as "comparative method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 21-22), "progressive focusing" (Hamilton et al., 1977, p. 15), and "collapsing outlines" (L. M. Smith, 1978, p. 339).

At this point, we developed an outline, a loose framework to guide us as we committed our findings to paper in such a way that they not only revealed the major stories in each of the settings but were also useful for later cross-site comparisons by our program or our readers. This process resulted in the individual case studies available from the Instructional Management Program. The following discussion relates both the dilemmas of writing ethnographic accounts and the principles to which we subscribed in their production.

Reporting the Studies

The reporting of the findings of this form of research has been recognized for years as problematic. Its "thick description[s]" (Geertz, 1973)--the descriptive portrayal of persons, places, and interactions--are at once inviting and

inaccessible. Such presentations, when carefully crafted, capture a reader's interest. The sense of "being there" that evolves from reading such works allows the reader to evaluate the conclusions drawn in the study and to test them against the reader's own sensibilities and experiences.

At the same time, journals resist the publication of lengthy theses, and researchers and practitioners find it difficult to spend the time necessary to digest and use lengthy ethnographic reports (Wolcott, 1982). Attempts to solve the problem by falling back on the reductionist measures of some qualitativists (e.g., Flanders, 1970) or borrowing procedures from the quantitativists hold little promise for those seeking to add to existing perspectives on the social world. In fact, such attempts may be fundamentally contradictory (J. K. Smith, 1983). This dilemma of "thick" versus "thin" is stated somewhat whimsically by Hexter (1971) as he compares historical and scientific approaches to knowledge:

> Historical stories are quite unlike scientific explanation sketches. The latter are <u>thin</u>; they have to be filled out with missing words and sentences formulating the missing implied laws and boundary conditions. . . . Historical stories . . . are not thin; by scientific standards they are often fat, egregiously obese, stuffed with unessential words quite useless for the purpose of adequate and satisfactory explanation. (p. 51)

Despite such "obes[ity]," the descriptive narrative remains the ethnographer's primary tool for reporting. To begin resolving the problem, narratives must be written efficiently; they must yield thick description, yet avoid verbiage. Data must be packed into succinct sentences that both describe and underscore issues that can be held for later discussion. Illustrations from data records must be selected carefully; the most exemplary of any concept or category must be chosen; and the redundancy that often results from being too fond of one's own study must be avoided.

This problem of length is accentuated in the important trend from single case studies to multi-site field studies (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Each setting and theme requires thorough description; moreover, casting multiple tales mandates the careful drawing of contrasts and comparisons. This raises a further problem: Stories must be parallel so that comparisons and contrasts can be easily seen by readers. At the same time, this restraint must not be so rigid that the unique character of individual situations is lost. In this regard, we believe the process that we have utilized and described is particularly important; an overall schema for the comparison of case instances is initially established, but important site-specific modifications are made.

There is a price to pay in the concise reporting of field data, one that ironically stems from the attempt to remedy the "too long" complaint of the critic of ethnographic reports. Predictably, the following summary will elicit two criticisms. One, "How do I (the reader) know that what you tell me is truly representative of behavior in the setting?" Two, "How do I know how you know these things--what is the source of the data?" A simple answer would be to contact the author and discuss the study further. One might also obtain the longer versions of reports from which the summaries were written. Or one might wish to deal directly with several hundred or thousand pages of data. In short, the very same critics who decry an ethnography's length may be the first to ask for more.

We do not wish to belittle this problem or deny its sincere relevance to those trained in traditions of research where validity, reliability, verification, and replication are among the basic tenets of the scientific approach. These concerns, however central to science, create an unwieldy process that can defeat readers and reporters alike by lengthening manuscripts to unmanageable lengths.*

Two conditions would ameliorate this problem. First, there needs to be a willingness to acknowledge alternative forms of research (e.g., Campbell, 1974; Cronbach, 1975). Second, practitioners of ethnography must carefully consider the appropriateness of the method for their inquiry, and they must fully describe their procedures. Once again, this allows the reader to judge the work's adequacy and ultimate utility. It is to this final premise that this monograph is dedicated.

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*A sizable literature discusses these very issues in relation to the field study method, yet it fails to satisfy most hard-core positivists. See for example Bruyn's (1966) discussion of conditions for "adequate objectivity." See also Miles and Huberman, 1984 and Yin, 1981.

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APPENDIX A

Protocol for
Initial Principal Interview
and
School Description Instrument

IMP Initial Principal Interview

In recent years, research has identified the principal as an important actor in the instructional process but has not successfully specified what principals actually should do in their day-to-day efforts that enhances the effectiveness of a school's program. The Instructional Management Program at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco was created to develop a better understanding of the important role that principals play in successful schools. Our work is funded by the National Institute of Education and responds to a regional research agenda established by the Laboratory's board. Our board consists of educators and community members from the states of Utah, Nevada and California.

Our Program's particular focus is the link between principals' activities at the building level and student achievement. We are examining the most recent ideas about effective school leadership and integrating those with current notions about how schools function as organizations. Teachers and principals like yourself have been invited to join us in a collaborative effort to discover ways in which principals can and do promote student achievement. Materials and techniques that can be used to improve the instructional management process will be developed from our studies.

Our conversation today begins this process. We are interested in how you think about your school and your job. We want to know what you <u>do</u> and what you <u>believe</u> about how you can help kids learn. We want to find out the kinds of things about schools that you think are important and enough about your background to know where some of those ideas developed.

Opening Questions
Time Allocation: 15 Min.

Q: LET'S BEGIN WITH THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL HISTORY NOTION. COULD YOU SAY A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF? YOUR AGE? CAREER? WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO EDUCATION AND THE PRINCIPALSHIP?

Probes: OTHER EDUCATORS IN THE FAMILY?

WHERE TRAINED? WHAT DEGREES?

DID YOU TEACH? HOW LONG? GRADE LEVELS AND SUBJECTS?

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A PRINCIPAL?

SATISFACTION AT THE JOB?

IMPORTANT TRAINING EXPERIENCES?

MOST IMPORTANT PERSON?

WHAT KINDS OF ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS HAVE YOU HELD? WHERE? HOW LONG?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SCHOOL ROLE? WHY?

WHY DID YOU SETTLE ON ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE OR JR. HIGH SCHOOL?

Q: LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOLING. WHAT ARE YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OR PURPOSE OF SCHOOLS ?

Probes: DO YOU THINK THE MISSION OF SCHOOLS HAS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

HOW DOES YOUR PHILOSOPHY FIT TODAY'S SOCIETY?

HOW DOES YOUR PHILOSOPHY FIT THE NEEDS OF A DISTRICT LIKE _____?

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR SCHOOL? FOR YOUR STUDENTS?

Probes: HOW IS THE SCHOOL DIFFERENT TODAY FROM WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED HERE AS PRINCIPAL? HOW DO THOSE DIFFERENCES REFLECT YOUR GOALS?

WHERE DO YOUR GOALS COME FROM? YOUR PHILOSOPHY? THE DISTRICT? THE COMMUNITY?

DO YOUR GOALS, THE DISTRICT'S AND THE COMMUNITY'S MATCH? HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT? WHICH GETS PRIORITY?

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU WERE ASSIGNED AS PRINCIPAL FOR THIS SCHOOL?

Introduction of Model
Time Allocation: 10 Min.

Statement: From our interviews and work with principals last year, we developed a model that seems to capture many aspects of the principal's job.

Present the model.

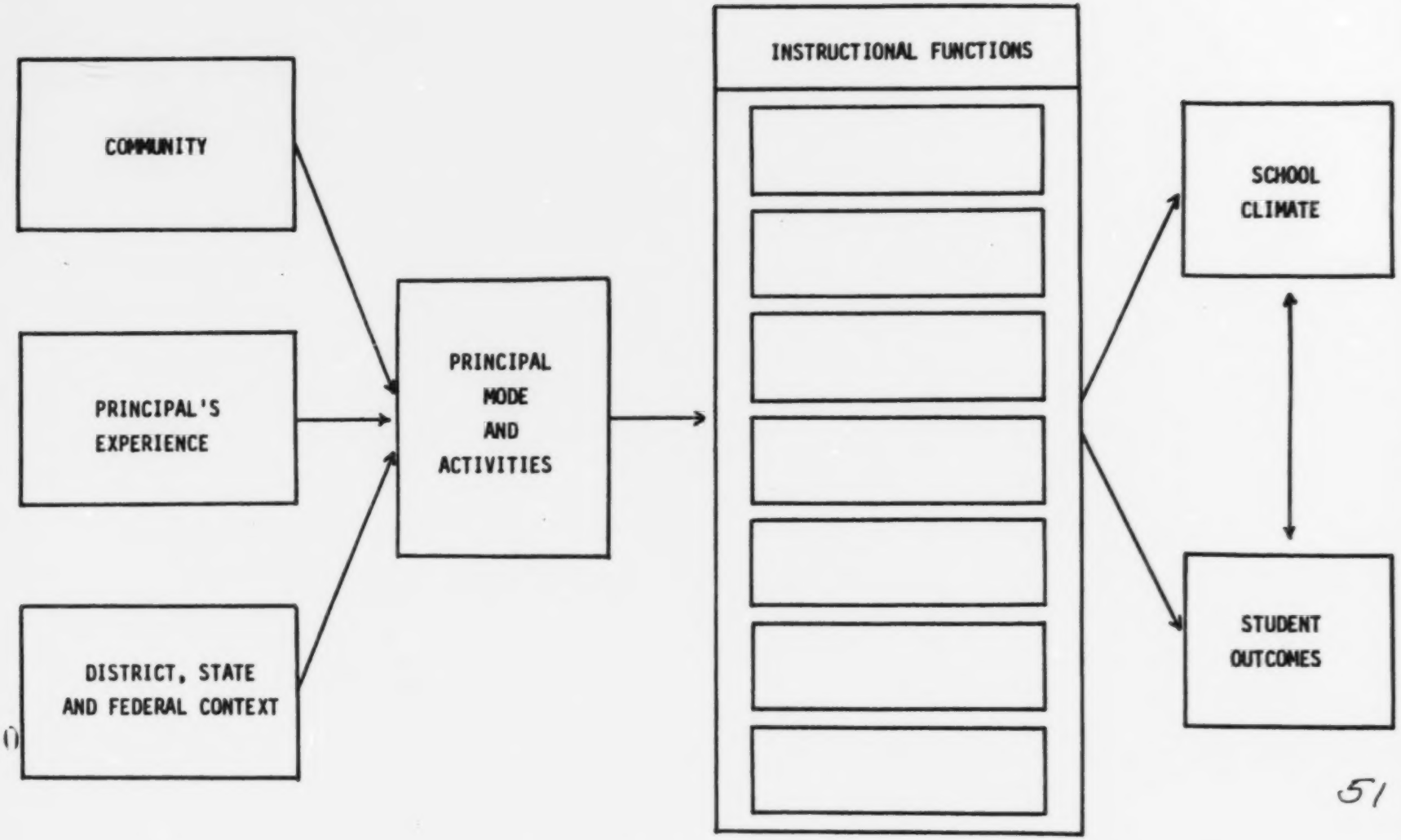
From left to right, the model shows that we learned that the principal's activities and leadership style may be influenced by the community the school serves, the principal's personal experiences, training and beliefs, and the conditions set by many district, state and federal policies and programs.

Principals combine all this information with their knowledge of the needs of their schools to run their schools' instructional program. Individual principals, however, go about this in very different ways.

The model suggests that there is some set of Instructional Functions which must be accomplished for effective classroom practice to proceed and that these functions somehow have effects on School Climate, Student Outcomes, or both.

We have already, for example, talked about your background and I have some idea about how your experiences and beliefs affect your work. What I would like to do for the remainder of our time is to ask you to think about other boxes and the relationships between them as they are relevant to your school and leadership style.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS REGARDING THE MODEL BEFORE WE BEGIN?


COMMUNITY
PRINCIPAL'S EXPERIENCE
DISTRICT, STATE AND FEDERAL CONTEXT
PRINCIPAL MODE AND ACTIVITIES
INSTRUCTIONAL FUNCTIONS
SCHOOL CLIMATE
STUDENT OUTCOMES

Questions from the Model
Time Allocation: 65 Min.

Q: HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH YOUR SCHOOL IS LOCATED AFFECT WHAT YOU DO AND THE PROGRAM YOU ADMINISTER?

Probes: ARE PARENTS SUPPORTIVE OF YOUR PROGRAM? WHAT IS THEIR ROLE AT YOUR SCHOOL?

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE AVERAGE FAMILY AT YOUR SCHOOL? DO PARENTS TAKE ACTIVE ROLES WITH THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME REGARDING SCHOOL WORK?

IS THERE MUCH STUDENT TURNOVER FROM YEAR TO YEAR? HOW MANY YOUNGSTERS WHO BEGIN KINDERGARTEN HERE ACTUALLY FINISH THE (6TH) GRADE HERE?

ARE THERE OTHER SPECIAL PROBLEMS THAT THE COMMUNITY FACES THAT AFFECT YOUR WORK OR THE NATURE OF THE SCHOOL?

Q: HOW ABOUT DISTRICT CONSTRAINTS ON YOUR ACTIVITIES? HOW DOES THE DISTRICT DEFINE YOUR JOB OR WISH YOU TO SPEND YOUR TIME?

Probes: ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS? COULD YOU DESCRIBE THEM?

HOW IS YOUR WORK SUPERVISED OR MONITORED AND BY WHOM? ON WHAT BASIS ARE YOU EVALUATED?

MANY PRINCIPALS REPORT THAT THEIR AUTONOMY IS DIMINISHING. DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY? WHY?

Q: WHAT ABOUT STATE OR FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND PROGRAMS? HOW DO THEY INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIVITIES?

Probes: IN WHAT STATE OR FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS DOES YOUR SCHOOL PARTICIPATE? WHAT KINDS OF INVOLVEMENT DO THOSE PROGRAMS NECESSITATE IN TERMS OF YOUR TIME AND EFFORT?

DO YOU HAVE ANY DISCRETION ABOUT WHICH PROGRAMS YOU PARTICIPATE IN?

HOW DO THESE PROGRAMS HELP OR HINDER YOUR MISSION?

Statement: The large box which contains the smaller empty boxes and is titled "Instructional Functions" represents all the structures, or activities, or parts of a school which must be in place for effective instruction to occur in the classroom. We have left the smaller boxes blank because different principals report different categories of Instructional Functions and we want to get your view.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK MUST BE INCLUDED IN THIS SECTION?

Actually write the categories the principal identifies into the boxes. Add others when necessary. Allow plenty of time for the generation of this list. Probe by asking clarifying questions. If you hear a category intrinsically discussed, suggest it as a possiblity. If the principal continues to have difficulty here, suggest some categories that you heard mentioned earlier in the conversation. For example, you might have heard the principal mention discipline, staff assignment, grouping students, scheduling, maintaining the building, hiring or firing, or evaluation. Suggest one or two of these to stimulate his or her thinking. But by all means, have the principal generate the list.

Q: THE REMAINING BOXES ARE LABELED "SCHOOL CLIMATE" AND "STUDENT OUTCOMES," AGAIN, BECAUSE PRINCIPALS HAVE IDENTIFIED THESE AS IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THEIR WORK. IS SCHOOL CLIMATE SOMETHING YOU CONSIDER IN YOUR WORK? HOW DO YOU DEFINE SCHOOL CLIMATE?

Probes: IS THERE MORE THAN ONE KIND OF CLIMATE? FOR EXAMPLE, IS THERE PHYSICAL CLIMATE (TEMPERATURE, LIGHT, COLOR, BUILDING ORDER OR CLEANLINESS) AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE (CAMARADERIE, TEAM SPIRIT, BELONGINGNESS, POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT, SAFETY, EXPECTATION)?

IS CLASSROOM CLIMATE DIFFERENT FROM SCHOOL CLIMATE? HOW ARE THEY RELATED?

HOW DO YOU "FEEL A CLIMATE?" CAN CLIMATE BE MONITORED? HOW?

Q: NOTE THAT WE TITLED THE BOX, "STUDENT OUTCOMES," IN THE PLURAL. PRINCIPALS HAVE IDENTIFIED DIFFERENT KINDS OF EXPECTATIONS FOR THEIR STUDENTS, DIFFERENT FORMS OF SUCCESSES. WHAT WOULD YOU PUT INTO THIS BOX?

Probe Strategy: If the principal has a difficult time starting or if you feel that there is more to the story, ask about the principal's "ideal student." Given ideal conditions, what would the ideal graduate of the school be able to do or how would that graduate be able to act?

Q: IF YOU STILL HAVE SOME TIME AND ENERGY, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK MORE ABOUT THE THE PARTS OF "INSTRUCTIONAL FUNCTIONS" BOX THAT YOU IDENTIFIED. FIRST, YOU IDENTIFIED MANY PARTS OF THAT WHOLE. I AM ASSUMING THAT YOU MAY NOT DO ALL OF THESE THINGS AT ONCE OR THAT SOME OF THE FUNCTIONS MAY FALL TO OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR STAFF? IS THIS ASSUMPTION VALID? COULD YOU ELABORATE?

Q: WHICH OF THESE FUNCTIONS REQUIRE YOUR CONSTANT ATTENTION OR ACTIVITY? CAN ANY BE DEALT WITH PERMANENTLY, REQUIRING YOUR TIME ONLY ONCE? ARE ANY OF THE FUNCTIONS CYCLICAL, THAT IS, DO YOU DO SOME OF THESE THINGS AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE YEAR AND NOT AT OTHERS? WHAT DETERMINES SUCH CYCLES?

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EACH FUNCTION AND SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT OUTCOMES?

INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Please complete and return to:

Instructional Management Program
Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
ATTN: D. Dwyer
1855 Folsom Street
San Francisco, California 94103.

A stamped and addressed envelope is attached. As with our interviews, all information contained in the completed questionnaire will be held in the strictest confidence. Any reference to this information will be made in such a way that your anonymity will be guaranteed.

PERSONAL

1. Name:_____

2. Sex:_____ 3. Age:_____ 4. Race:_____ 5. Marital Status:_____

6. Number of children:_____

7. Number of years as principal:_____

8. Other professional positions held:

Position	Number of years
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. Number of years in this school. _____yrs.

10. Number of years in present district. _____yrs.

11. Hobbies:_____

_____

12. Other organizations in which you participate:_____

_____

_____

13. Other leadership positions held:_____

_____

_____

14. Current degree:_____ Where awarded:_____

_____

15. Who or what do you model your leadership style after? Person? Theory? Course work? Be specific if you can.

_____

_____

_____

_____

SCHOOL

1. Name of school:_____
2. Grade levels within school:_____
3. Number of students enrolled:____ 4. Number of classrooms:____
5. Average Daily Attendance:____
6. Estimated racial composition of student body: ____% Black

____% Spanish Surname

____% Asian

____% White

____% Other

7. Percent AFDC:____
8. Socioeconomic status of student families: ____% professional

____% semiprofessional

____% skilled/semiskilled

____% unskilled

____% unknown

9. Number and type of administrative positions in school (asst. prin., counselor):

_____

10. Number and types of specialists or consultants (reading spec., special ed.):

_____

_____

11. Number of teachers in school:_____

12. Number of secretaries:_____ 13. Number of aides:_____

14. Number of custodians:_____

15. List the funded special projects currently in your school:

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. List the avenues for parent involvement at your school:

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. Age of school building:_____yrs.

18. How is the staff organized for instruction? Self-contained classrooms? Teams? Grade levels? Continuous progress?

_____

_____

_____

_____

19. Estimate the relative experience of your teaching staff:_____% 1 to 3 years

_____% 4 to 6 years

_____% 7 to 10 years

_____% more than 10 years

20. What standing committees, circuits or other groups are routinely involved in the planning and operation of the school program? _____

_____

_____

_____

PRINCIPAL IN THE DISTRICT

1. Title of immediate supervisor: _____

2. Who is the person you most often contact at the central office? _____

_____

What is his/her position? _____

3. Who do you find most helpful at the central office? _____

_____

4. What types of support are available from the central office? _____

_____

_____

_____

5. How many visits do you make to the central office per month? _____

6. How often do you interact with other principals within the district? What is the nature of those interactions? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Can a portion of your budget be used in a discretionary manner? If yes, what proportion? _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

Protocol for
Structured Interview With Teachers
and
School Features Inventory

IMP Teacher Interview

The Instructional Management Program at the Far West Laboratory was created to develop a better understanding of the role that principals play in successful schools. Our Program's particular focus is the link between principals' activities and what goes on in classrooms for both teachers and students. Last fall we concentrated primarily on the principal and began to become familiar with how the school operates. Now it is important for us to learn more about the teacher's perspective.

We would like to talk with you about how you view teaching and about how the school setting affects your work. We would also like you to help us understand how certain common features of school programs really function in this school. As in all our work, your comments will be kept confidential.

Questions about Teaching
Time Allocation: 10 Min.

Q: WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE CLASSROOM?
WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR STUDENTS?

Probes: ANYTHING ELSE?

BESIDES ACHIEVEMENT, OR LEARNING THE CONTENT OF INSTRUCTION, WHAT OTHER THINGS DO YOU THINK ARE IMPORTANT STUDENT OUTCOMES?
(e.g., self-concept, independent learning skills, . . .)

Probe: DO YOU DO ANYTHING SPECIAL IN THE CLASSROOM TO REACH THESE NON-ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES?
TELL ME ABOUT WHAT YOU DO?

Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR GENERAL APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION?

Probes: IS THERE ANY SPECIFIC THEORY OR PROGRAM THAT YOU USE?
(e.g., Madeline Hunter, mastery learning, assertive discipline)
(Do not pursue elaboration of curriculum, e.g., reading series.)

HOW DID YOU COME TO USE THAT APPROACH?

HAS YOUR TEACHING BEEN INFLUENCED BY ANY PARTICULAR PEOPLE?
WHO? AND, WHAT DID THEY DO?

Q: HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR TEACHING?
TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE REACHING YOUR GOALS?

Probes: WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DO YOU LOOK FOR TO TELL HOW YOU ARE DOING?
(e.g., student participation in class, your own fatigue level,)

Principal Questions
Time Allocation: 20 Min.

Q: AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE STUDYING THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN A SCHOOL. IF YOU COULD IMAGINE THE IDEAL PRINCIPAL, WHAT WOULD THAT PERSON BE LIKE?

Probes: WHAT WOULD S/HE DO?

WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD THAT MAKE TO YOUR TEACHING?

Q: WHAT ABOUT (X) AS A PRINCIPAL?

Probes: WHAT DO YOU THINK (X) TRIES TO ACCOMPLISH AS PRINCIPAL?

WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO EDUCATION, DIFFERENT OUTCOMES THAT PEOPLE VALUE FOR STUDENTS? WHAT DO YOU THINK IS (X)'S VIEW ABOUT HOW EDUCATION SHOULD TAKE PLACE?

Probes: WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT?

DOES (X) SAY OR DO ANYTHING TO MAKE YOU THINK THAT?

DOES (X) HAVE ANY LONG-RANGE GOALS FOR THE SCHOOL?

HAS (X) HAD ANY INFLUENCE ON WHAT YOU DO IN THE CLASSROOM? CAN YOU GIVE ME A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE?

Q: HOW MUCH DOES (X) KNOW ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING IN THE CLASSROOM? HOW DOES S/HE KNOW?

Probes: DOES (X) VISIT YOUR CLASSROOM? HOW OFTEN?

DOES (X) TALK WITH YOU ABOUT YOUR TEACHING?

DO YOU TURN IN LESSON PLANS? WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?

HOW IS (X) INVOLVED IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, STAFF DEVELOPMENT)?

Q: DOES (X) KNOW HOW YOUR STUDENTS ARE PERFORMING?

Probes: WHAT TESTING IS DONE IN THE CLASSROOM?
WHO SEES THE SCORES AND WHEN?

IS STUDENT WORK KEPT ON FILE?
WHO KEEPS IT?
WHO LOOKS AT IT AND WHEN?

Q: HOW (AND TO WHAT EXTENT) IS (X) INVOLVED IN COORDINATING THE CURRICULUM IN THE SCHOOL?

Probes: IS CURRICULUM COORDINATED WITHIN A GRADE LEVEL?
(that is, do all courses/classes in a subject matter at one grade level cover the same content)

Probe: WHAT ROLE DOES THE PRINCIPAL PLAY?

IS CURRICULUM COORDINATED ACROSS GRADE LEVELS?
(e.g., sequencing of content)

DOES COORDINATION OCCUR FOR ALL SUBJECT MATTER AREAS?

IS THERE ANY COORDINATION OF A BASIC SKILL LIKE READING ACROSS DIFFERENT SUBJECT MATTER AREAS?

Q: THE PRINCIPAL IS OFTEN NOT THE ONLY PERSON AT A SCHOOL WHO ACTS AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER. WHO ELSE AT YOUR SCHOOL DOES THIS? WHAT DO THEY DO?

Probes: IS THERE A CERTAIN PERSON OR COMMITTEE THAT YOU SEE ABOUT CERTAIN KINDS OF INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES?
(e.g., for advice, to obtain materials)

School Features Inventory
Time Allocation: 20 Min.

Statement: Now we would like you to help us understand some specific features of school operation. I have a form that we can fill out together. But I would also like to talk about these issues as we go along.

SCHOOL FEATURES INVENTORY

Teacher Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

Intern: _____

Subject(s): _____

Years of Teaching Experience: _____

Years in This School: _____

Professional Development -- What avenues of professional development are open to you?

Inservice: When and what topics?
(e.g., weekly meetings, varying topics, recently included . . .)

_____

_____

_____

How topics chosen: ____ by principal/administration
____ by school committee
____ based on needs-assessment
____ by teacher request
____ other: _____

Who attends: ____ all staff
____ grade-level groups
____ subject-matter groups
____ based on need/interest

Usefulness: ____ very helpful
____ moderately helpful
____ not very helpful

Other Avenues:	Never	Occasionally	Often
How often do you -- share ideas with other teachers	____	____	____
observe other classrooms	____	____	____
plan activities with others	____	____	____
take courses outside school	____	____	____
other = _____			

Does the principal encourage such activities? ____ no, ____ somewhat, ____ yes

If so, how? _____

_____

Goals for School Improvement

Are there specific improvement goals for the school (or department, circuit, etc.) this year? ____ yes, ____ no

If yes, please describe briefly: _____

_____

How were these goals decided upon?
- ____ school staff as a whole
- ____ school committee
- ____ department/circuit
- ____ school administration
- ____ district office/committee
- ____ other: _____

What influence do these goals have on your teaching?
(e.g., curriculum, methods of instruction, staff development meetings, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

Discipline

Is there a uniform discipline policy, e.g. concerning rules or expectations about student behavior, punishment and rewards:

for the school? ____ yes, ____ no
for the district? ____ yes, ____ no

If yes, please describe briefly: _____

_____

_____

If a student seriously misbehaved, would you:

	Yes	Maybe	No	(Note: If more than one "yes," then number in order used.)
Use classroom discipline techniques?	____	____	____	
Contact parents?	____	____	____	
Send to office?	____	____	____	
Use detention?	____	____	____	
Other: _____	____	____	____	

What records, if any, are kept about misbehavior? _____

_____

Where are they kept? ____ classroom, ____ school office, ____ district

Who looks at them and when? _____

_____

_____

If students are sent to the office, what happens to them there?

_____

_____

_____

Grade-Level Objectives/Expectations

Are there specific objectives/expectations for your instruction in:

Reading?	___ yes,	___ no.	If yes, are they sequenced?	___ yes,	___ no
Math?	___ yes,	___ no.	If yes, are they sequenced?	___ yes,	___ no
Language?	___ yes,	___ no.	If yes, are they sequenced?	___ yes,	___ no
Social Studies?	___ yes,	___ no.	If yes, are they sequenced?	___ yes,	___ no
Science?	___ yes,	___ no.	If yes, are they sequenced?	___ yes,	___ no

Who developed these objectives?
- ___ individual teacher
- ___ school committee/department
- ___ school administration
- ___ district office/committee
- ___ from textbook
- ___ other: _____

What part did the principal play? _____

_____

Are these objectives related to minimal competencies or exit-level proficiencies for your school? ___ yes, ___ no. If so, how:

_____

What records, if any, are kept?
- ___ lesson plans (what taught and when)
- ___ student performance (on
  - ___ district tests
  - ___ school tests
  - ___ teacher tests
  - ___ class assignments
  - ___ teacher judgment)

Where are they kept? ___ classroom, ___ school office, ___ district office

Who looks at them and when? _____

_____

What influence do these objectives have on your teaching?
(e.g., content to cover, pacing of instruction, adapting textbooks)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Student Evaluation

Do you give report cards? ____ yes, ____ no. If yes, when: _____
If no, describe briefly on the back of the page what you do.

What are the grade options for academics and how are they earned? (e.g., A = 90% correct on grade-level work)

____ = _____
____ = _____
____ = _____
____ = _____
____ = _____
____ = _____

What grade would be given to someone who is working below grade level but trying hard and making progress? _____

How do parents acknowledge grades?
____ conference with teacher
____ sign and return
____ none
____ other: _____

Are there any special school rewards for good behavior/performance? ____ yes, ____ no

If yes, what and when received? _____

_____

_____

_____

Promotion

How many students, if any, are retained each year? _____ students

What sources are considered in making the decision? (Check all that apply.)

____ specific mastery criteria: _____
____ grades, class work
____ teacher judgment
____ counselor
____ principal
____ parents
____ other: _____

How are parents involved in the decision? _____

_____

Parents

How (and how often) would you contact parents if a student were doing poorly?

	several times a week	once a week	once a month	2-3 times a year	never
notes/letters	____	____	____	____	____
phone calls	____	____	____	____	____
conferences	____	____	____	____	____
home visits	____	____	____	____	____
other: _____	____	____	____	____	____

How (and how often) would you contact parents if a student were doing well?

	several times a week	once a week	once a month	2-3 times a year	never
notes/letters	____	____	____	____	____
phone calls	____	____	____	____	____
conferences	____	____	____	____	____
home visits	____	____	____	____	____
other: _____	____	____	____	____	____

How often do you have parent volunteers in the classroom?

____ several times a week
____ once a week
____ once a month
____ 2-3 times a year
____ never

What is the principal's role in contact with parents? _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

Protocol for Student Interview

IMP Student Interview

Student Name:_____ K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

School:_____ M F B W A S O

Date:_____ A S R D I

Foot Marker at beginning:_____

Foot Marker at end:_____

Interview rating: H M L

I'm really glad that you are willing to help me find out about school principals. I am going to write about what a whole lot of kids think about principals. I want you to know that I will not tell anybody what you think or what you tell me today.

Student Interview
Student Name:_____
School:_____

Q: DO YOU KNOW WHO THE PRINCIPAL OF YOUR SCHOOL IS?

What is her/his name?

If you don't know his/her name, what does he/she look like?

(Terminate the interview if the child cannot respond to either of these questions.)

Q: WHAT DOES YOUR PRINCIPAL DO?

Where in the school do you see your principal? What is he/she doing when you see him/her? (Allow time for students to generate their own list of scenes. If they balk, suggest lunchroom, school yard, classroom, front hallway, etc. Ask specific probes: What was he doing when you saw him in the lunchroom? Who was he talking to? What about? What happened? How do you know? If you saw the principal with a child or in a child's classroom, help them by stimulating their recall of that event.)

Student Interview
Student Name:_____
School:_____

Q: HAVE YOU EVER TALKED TO YOUR PRINCIPAL?

Where were you when you talked with him/her?

What did you talk about?

What happened as a result of the conversation?

Did you ask the principal to speak with you, or did he/she ask to speak with you?

(Terminate the interview if the child has had no direct experience with the principal.)

Q: HOW HAS THE PRINCIPAL HELPED YOU SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN TO THIS SCHOOL?

What has he/she done to help you learn?

What has he/she done to help you feel better about your school?

Student Interview
Student Name:_____
School:_____

(Children may respond to the questions on this page by referring to physical characteristics of their principals. Be sure to move them onto behaviors and consequences they attribute to principals.)

Q: I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TRY TO IMAGINE A PERFECT PRINCIPAL. WHAT DO YOU THINK A PERFECT PRINCIPAL WOULD DO?

How could the principal help you learn better?

How could the principal make you feel better about going to this school?

How could the principal improve the whole school or you classroom?

Q: I WOULD LIKE YOU TO THINK ABOUT OTHER PRINCIPAL YOU HAVE KNOWN. CAN YOU REMEMBER A PRINCIPAL YOU HAD AT ANOTHER SCHOOL OR AT THIS SCHOOL BEFORE name of current principal CAME HERE?

How is _____ different from your other principal? Do they do different things?

Did you see one of these principals more than the other or in different places around the school?

Was one of them more helpful to you? How? Did one of them help make the school a nicer place to be? How?

(You may wish to use comments the student made in other portions of this interview to stimulate the child's thoughts. Asks for contrasts and comparisons with his or her reflections on the current principal.)

APPENDIX D

Instructional Organization Instrument

PART I: INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION INSTRUMENT

School: _____

Person Interviewed and position in school: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

(1) SCHOOL-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPING:

We are interested in how your staff has been organized for the delivery of instruction. Below are some common modes of school-level grouping. We're interested in what modes you use at each grade level.

Dimensions of School-level Grouping

(1) Differentiation of teaching staff: In some schools, teachers are generalists and teach all academic subjects. In other schools, teachers specialize in the teaching of one (or two) academic subjects. Thus, one dimension of school level grouping is whether teachers are specialists or generalists:

a. If teachers are are subject matter generalists, and students receive instruction in most of their subjects in the same classroom and from the same teacher, we consider that the school has SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOMS.

b. If, however, teachers become become subject matter specialists and students recieve instruction in each subject from a different teacher (e.g. teaming, departmentalization), we consider that the school uses a CLUSTER FORM of instructional organization.

(2) Grade-level organization: A second dimension of classroom organization concerns the extent to which classrooms contain students from the same grade level. Our experience suggests three common variations:

a. GRADE-LEVEL ORGANIZATION occurs when a classroom contains students at a single grade level.

b. MULTI-GRADING occurs when a classroom contains students from more than one grade level (e.g. a 4/5 combination).

c. CONTINUOUS PROGRESS organization occurs when instruction is not organized by grade level--the system is ungraded.

In our own work, we have found it useful to combine these dimensions to classify patterns of school-level instructional grouping, although we recognize that unique forms of grouping are possible. The most common types of grouping in schools are:

1. Self-contained classrooms/ grade-level organization
2. Self-contained classrooms/ multi-grading
3. Cluster organization/ grade-level
4. Cluster organization/ multi-grading
5. Continuous progress.

On the following page, we would like you to help us classify the classrooms in your school.

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(1) SCHOOL-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPING (cont.)

In the spaces below, indicate the number of classrooms at particular grades that take one of the organizational forms noted below. For multi-graded classrooms, circle the years combined and show the number of each combination.

	GRADES									
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Self-contained/ grade-level	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Self contained/ multigrading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Cluster form/ grade-level	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Cluster form/ multi-grading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Continuous progress	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Other (describe)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

USE THIS SPACE TO RECORD COMMENTS AND/OR CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(2A) CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT

We are also interested in how students are assigned to regular classrooms. Thus, for the moment, we are not interested in pull out programs. Below are some common ways students are assigned:

(a) Ability grouping: students are assigned to classrooms on the basis of ability. For example, students may be divided into high, medium and low achievers on the basis of standardized achievement scores and then assigned to classrooms. Do not include classrooms for gifted or other special students in this category.

(b) Curriculum Tracking: the school offers more than one curriculum or program (e.g. open vs. basic program/business vs. college prep) and students assigned to these tracks are generally in separate academic classes.

(c) Gifted Classrooms: separate classrooms are established for gifted students or "clusters" of gifted students are assigned to the same classroom at particular grade-levels.

(d) Other special education classrooms: separate classrooms are established for "special education" students.

(e) None of the above: students are not assigned to classrooms on basis of ability, exceptionality or programmatic considerations.

Directions

In the spaces below, please indicate with a check (✓) whether any of the above grouping rules are used at particular grade levels.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Ability grouping	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Curriculum tracks	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Gifted classrooms	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Special ed. classes	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
None of the above	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

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(2B) CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT (cont.)

We are also interested in who has the most influence in assigning students to classrooms. Which of the following procedures best illustrates what happens in your school.

a. Principal has chief responsibility _____

b. Principal and teachers share responsibility _____

c. Teachers have main responsibility _____

d. Scheduling procedures determine student assignments _____

e. Students and/or parents select _____

f. Other (describe) _____

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(2C) CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT (cont.)

Finally, we want to get an idea of why students are placed into particular classrooms. Below are some common reasons for assigning students to specific teachers. Please rank order these in terms of importance to you or your staff as assignment decisions are made. NOTE: 1 = most important; 2 = next important; etc.

___ Student's conduct

___ Student's achievement

Student/teacher match

___ a. learning/teaching styles

___ b. student conduct/teacher discipline

___ c. other _____

___ Race/sex balance

___ Parent preferences

___ Scheduling considerations

Other:

___ _____

___ _____

___ _____

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(3) ACROSS-CLASSROOM GROUPING

These days, many teachers exchange students during reading and math or send students to specialists for remedial or special instruction. Can you tell us about these types of arrangements in your school? That is, in each of the grades listed below, place a check (✓) if any of the following types of cross-classroom grouping are employed.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A. Cross-classroom grouping										
for reading	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
for language arts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
for math	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
other _____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
B. Classrooms to specialists										
to library	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
to math specialist	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
to reading specialist	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
to other _____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
_____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
_____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
C. Multi-class activities										
movies	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
field trips	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
assemblies	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
other _____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
_____	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(4) EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We are interested in opportunities students have to partipate in extra-curricular activities. What formally organized clubs, organizations, or teams can students in your school join? How frequently do the groups meet? Are the groups only for students from certain grades? (If yes, which grades are eligible?)

Activity	Frequency of Meeting	Grades

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(5A) CURRICULUM MATERIALS

We would like a brief description of the curriculum materials in use at your school.

A. Is there a schoolwide textbook series (if so please indicate publisher)*:

reading ____yes____no/grades covered:_____/may teachers supplement? _____

math ____yes____no/grades covered:_____/may teachers supplement?_____

language arts ____yes____no/grades covered:_____/may teachers supplement? _____

social studies ____yes____no/grades covered:_____/may teachers supplement? _____

science ____yes____no/grades covered:_____/may teachers supplement? _____

* If the answer to any of the above is no, go to next page.
If the answer to any of the above is yes, complete question below.

B. How were the schoolwide texts chosen?

_____ school committee
_____ district committee
_____ principal
_____ other _____

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(5C) CURRICULUM MATERIALS (cont.)

C. If no schoolwide text has been adopted, indicate with a check (✓) if any of the below are true.

	grade-level uniformity of texts	teachers use own materials	texts vary by track or ability group	Other (describe)
reading:	_____	_____	_____	_____
math:	_____	_____	_____	_____
language arts:	_____	_____	_____	_____
social studies:	_____	_____	_____	_____
science:	_____	_____	_____	_____

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(6) CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

Next, we would like to know something about the instructional goals and objectives in your school.

A. Are there specific objectives/expectations for grade levels in:

Reading: ___yes ___no/for what grades _____/are they: mandatory_____/sequenced____

Math: ___yes ___no/for what grades _____/are they: mandatory_____/sequenced____

Language arts: ___yes ___no/for what grades _____/are they: mandatory_____/sequenced____

Social Studies: ___yes ___no/for what grades _____/are they: mandatory_____/sequenced____

Science: ___yes ___no/for what grades _____/are they: mandatory_____/sequenced____

B. IF THERE ARE OBJECTIVES, how were these objectives set?

	State Mandated	School Committee	School Administration	District Office or Committee	Derived from Textbook	Other (describe on back)
Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Math	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Language Arts	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(6C) CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES (cont.)

C. IF THERE ARE SCHOOLWIDE OBJECTIVES, has your school taken any steps to coordinate, align, or correlate these with any of the following?

textbook adoptions	____yes	____no
pacing of instruction	____yes	____no
choice of standardized tests	____yes	____no
other types of achievement testing	____yes	____no
inservice activities	____yes	____no

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

(7) MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM: ACHIEVEMENT

We are interested in how you gather information about the academic program in your school. Below are some common ways principals gather data or information on teaching and learning in classrooms. We want to know if you use any of the following and how frequently you use them.

a. Inspect teachers' lesson plans _____yes ____no/if yes, frequency _____

b. Inspect students' assignments _____yes ____no/if yes, frequency _____

c. Report card grades _____yes ____no/if yes, frequency _____

d. Inspect results of criterion referenced tests (including those from text books) _____yes ____no/if yes, frequency _____

e. Inspect results of norm referenced achievement tests _____yes ____no/if yes, frequency _____

f. Other information (describe) _____ frequency _____

Do you use these forms of information in <u>all</u> curriculum areas, or are there particular areas you are currently focusing on?

_____ All areas

_____ Not all areas (list areas of special concern below)

USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDED COMMENTS AND/OR TO CLARIFY OBSERVATIONS

PART II: INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION INSTRUMENT

School: _____

Person Interviewed and position in school: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

(8) INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

We are interested in whether there are policies or rules governing classroom instruction, how these were arrived at, and whether they are explicit or merely provide general guidelines.

Are there rules or policies in this school about:

a. Within-classroom grouping (e.g., # of reading groups, size of groups, assignment criteria, movement between groups)? Are these explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are grouping decisions made?

b. Pacing or student advancement (e.g., movement through a skills continuum; movement from high to low ability classrooms; movement from one curriculum track to another)? Are these explicit (e.g. standardized or criterion referenced tests-describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are pacing decisions made?

c. Student promotion (i.e., criteria for promotion to another grade level)? Are these explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions about student promotion made?

d. Student evaluation (e.g., grading, testing, report cards)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions about student evaluation made?

e. Teaching techniques (e.g., lesson format, room arrangement, use of aides or other adults, praise/prompt, etc.)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions about teaching techniques made?

f. Schedules (e.g. allocation of classroom instructional time to curriculum topics, time of recesses and/or lunches)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are scheduling decisions made?

g. Homework (e.g., frequency, length of time, parent cooperation)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions about homework assignments made?

h. Use of Specialists (e.g., assignment of students to special or compensatory programs within the school, referral of students to specialists, etc.)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How were these policies formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions about use of specialists made?

i. Discipline (e.g., uniform rules or expectations for behavior, punishment, rewards for good behavior, etc.)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated?

j. Inservice for teaching staff (e.g. schoolwide focus, amount and/or type of participation, etc.)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there are no policies, how are decisions about inservice made?

k. Assignment of students to auxiliary organizations (e.g. safety patrol, A/V operators, etc.)? Are the policies explicit (describe)? How was the policy formulated? If there is no policy, how are decisions in this area made?

1. Teacher evaluation both formal and informal (including clinical supervision of teachers)? Are these policies explicit (describe)? How were these policies formulated? If there is no policy, how is teacher evaluation accomplished?

PART III: INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION INSTRUMENT

School: _____

Source(s) of information: _____

Observer: _____

Date(s): _____

(9) SCHOOL STAFFING

We would like to have a complete listing of the school staff. Please provide for us a list with the following information -- FTE, Position title, # years in school, and # years in position. Attach separate sheet

1. Administrators

2. Specialists (include counselors, psychologists, etc.)

3. Classroom teachers

4. Special teachers

5. Aides (please give time distribution in classrooms/yard/lunchroom/etc.)

6. Classified Personnel (clerks, secretaries, custodians)

(10) SCHOOL COMMITTEES

Name	Domain*	Members	Frequency	Powers†

* Domains

a. personnel assignment
b. budget allocation
c. program evaluation
d. teaching techniques
e. curriculum objectives
f. curriculum materials
g. student placement
h. home-school relations
i. physical plant
j. other (please describe)

†Powers

a. discussion only
b. recommendation
c. decision
d. evaluation